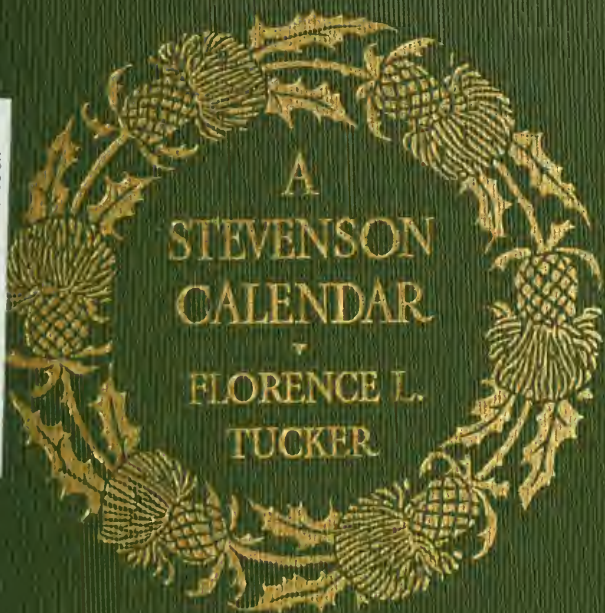


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A STEVENSON CALENDAR



A STEVENSON

CALENDAR

EDITED BY

FLORENCE L. TUCKER



NEW YORK

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. . . Those he loves that underprop
With daily virtues heaven's top,
And bear the falling sky with ease,
Unfrowning caryatides.

Our Lady of the Snows.

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PREFATORY NOTE

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WE on this side the water think of Robert Louis Stevenson oftenest, perhaps, in his island home, working — this indefatigable “idler,” as he called himself — from six o’clock in the morning until four in the afternoon; dictating with his hands when voice as well as strength failed; and when he was better, moved by a restless and superabundant energy, the last to retire at night, and the first to rise in the morning. There is something peculiarly appealing in this isolation, as we fancy the lonely exile pacing through his nightly walk in the unlighted darkness while all of his household slept, and rising in the dusk of the Samoan morning with no cheerful, stirring sound of life to greet him but the monotonous chirp of a single lone bird.

It touches us like the recollection of the sleepless nights he tells of in *Nuits Blanches*, when the delicate child was held up by his faithful nurse to look out at the window, while together they wondered if in other houses little children were

wakeful; and again and again he asked, "When will the carts come in?"

Though he worked on faithfully and cheerfully to the very last, finding interest in the strange peoples about him, and sending back his messages to the world he had bidden farewell, we think his brave spirit must have sometimes cried out in that long night of banishment, "When will the carts come in?"

And thinking of him thus, our affection goes out to him even as before that fateful December day at Valaima and the making of the lonely grave on Mount Vaea; and there has been gathered here certain of his sayings into a sort of little storehouse of loving memory. The moral reflections dropped by the way are the personal side of a man, and as much as any known writer Stevenson has been loved for his personality. This little volume has been compiled for his friends—the selections are such as would be the remarks made in conversation with spirits congenial and sympathetic, and so appeal to every one alike; each has the same message for all, each is the word of cherished recollection.

F. L. T.

ATLANTA, GA.



JANUARY

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JANUARY FIRST

EVERY sin is our last ; every first of January
a remarkable turning-point in our career.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JANUARY SECOND

By all means begin your folio ; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push and see what can be finished in a week. It is not only in finished undertakings that we ought to honour useful labour. A spirit goes out of the man who means execution, which outlives the most untimely ending. All who have meant good work with their whole hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind.

Aes Triplex.

JANUARY THIRD

There is but one test of a good life: that the man shall continue to grow more difficult about his own behaviour. That is to be good: there is no other virtue attainable.

Discipline of Conscience.

JANUARY FOURTH

It is a commonplace, that we cannot answer for ourselves before we have been tried. But it is not so common a reflection, and surely more consoling, that we usually find ourselves a great deal braver and better than we thought.

An Inland Voyage.

JANUARY FIFTH

To make this earth our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page,
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

The House Beautiful.

JANUARY SIXTH

What do we owe our parents? No man can *owe* love; none can *owe* obedience. We owe, I think, chiefly pity; for we are the pledge of their dear and joyful union, we have been the solicitude of their days and the anxiety of their nights, we have made them, though by no will of ours, to carry the burthen of our sins, sorrows, and

physical infirmities; and too many of us grow up at length to disappoint the purpose of their lives and requite their care and piety with cruel pangs.

Reflections and Remarks.

JANUARY SEVENTH

We are most of us attached to our opinions; that is one of the “natural affections” of which we hear so much in youth; but few of us are altogether free from paralysing doubts and scruples.

Preface to Familiar Studies.

JANUARY EIGHTH

Restfulness is a quality for cattle; the virtues are all active, life is alert, and it is in repose that men prepare themselves for evil.

Talk and Talkers.

JANUARY NINTH

A little society is needful to show a man his failings; for if he lives entirely by himself, he has no occasion to fall, and like a soldier in time of peace, becomes both weak and vain. But a little solitude must be used, or we grow content with current virtues and forget the ideal. In society we lose scrupulous brightness of

honour; in solitude we lose the courage necessary to face our own imperfections.

Reflections and Remarks.

JANUARY TENTH

Fond as it may appear, we labour and refrain, not for the rewards of any single life, but with a timid eye upon the lives and memories of our successors; and where no one is to succeed, of his own family, or his own tongue, I doubt whether Rothschilds would make money or Cato practise virtue.

Death.

JANUARY ELEVENTH

To the grown person, cold mutton is cold mutton all the world over; not all the mythology ever invented by man will make it better or worse to him; the broad fact, the clamant reality, of the mutton carries away before it such seductive figments. But for the child it is still possible to weave an enchantment over eatables; and if he has but read of a dish in a story-book, it will be heavenly manna to him for a week.

Child's Play.

JANUARY TWELFTH

When a man is in a fair way and sees all life open in front of him, he seems to himself to make a very important figure in the world. . . . But once he is dead, were he as brave as Hercules or as wise as Solomon, he is soon forgotten.

The Sire de Malétroit's Door.

JANUARY THIRTEENTH

The names of virtues exercise a charm on most of us; we must lay claim to all of them, however incompatible; we must all be both daring and prudent; we must all vaunt our pride and go to the stake for our humility.

Of Love and Politics.

JANUARY FOURTEENTH

Life, my old shipmate, life, at any moment and in any view, is as dangerous as a sinking ship; and yet it is man's handsome fashion to carry umbrellas, to wear indiarubber overshoes, to begin vast works, and to conduct himself in every way as if he might hope to be eternal.

Fable of the Sinking Ship.

JANUARY FIFTEENTH

We are subject to physical passions and contortions; the voice breaks and changes, and speaks by unconscious and winning inflections; we

have legible countenances, like an open book ; things that cannot be said look eloquently through the eyes ; and the soul, not locked into the body as a dungeon, dwells ever on the threshold with appealing signals.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JANUARY SIXTEENTH

No art, it may be said, was ever perfect, and not many noble, that has not been mirthfully conceived. And no man, it may be added, was ever anything but a wet blanket and a cross to his companions who boasted not a copious spirit of enjoyment.

Fontainebleau.

JANUARY SEVENTEENTH

All sins are murder, even as all life is war. I behold your race, like starving mariners on a raft, plucking crusts out of the hands of famine and feeding on each other's lives. I follow sins beyond the moment of their acting ; I find in all that the last consequence is death ; and to my eyes, the pretty maid who thwarts her mother with such taking graces on a question of a ball, drips no less with human gore than such a murderer as yourself.

Markheim.

JANUARY EIGHTEENTH

Success wins glory, but it kills affection, which
misfortune fosters

The Story of a Plantation.

JANUARY NINETEENTH

A generous prayer is never presented in vain ;
the petition may be refused, but the petitioner
is always, I believe, rewarded by some gracious
visitation.

The Merry Men.

JANUARY TWENTIETH

Of those who fail, I do not speak — despair
should be sacred ; but to those who even mod-
estly succeed, the changes of their life bring
interest : a job found, a shilling saved, a dainty
earned, all these are wells of pleasure springing
afresh for the successful poor ; and it is not
from these but from the villa dweller that we
hear complaints of the unworthiness of life.

The Day after To-morrow.

JANUARY TWENTY-FIRST

Despise riches, avoid the debasing influence of
cities. Hygiene — hygiene and mediocrity of
fortune — these be your watchwords during life.

The Treasure of Franchard.

JANUARY TWENTY-SECOND

The salary in any business under heaven is not the only, nor indeed, the first question. That you should continue to exist is a matter for your own consideration ; but that your business should be first honest, and second useful, are points in which honour and morality are concerned.

Profession of Letters.

JANUARY TWENTY-THIRD

To avoid an occasion for our virtues is a worse degree of failure than to push forward pluckily and make a fall. It is lawful to pray God that we be not led into temptation ; but not lawful to skulk from those that come to us.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JANUARY TWENTY-FOURTH

Wherever a man is, he will find something to please and pacify him : in the town he will meet pleasant faces of men and women, and see beautiful flowers at a window, or hear a cage-bird singing at the corner of the gloomiest street ; and for the country, there is no country without some amenity — let him only look for it in the right spirit, and he will surely find.

Unpleasant Places.

JANUARY TWENTY-FIFTH

We talk of bad and good — everything, indeed, is good which is conceived with honesty and executed with communicative ardour.

A Note on Realism.

JANUARY TWENTY-SIXTH

To be suddenly snuffed out in the middle of ambitious schemes, is tragical enough at best; but when a man has been grudging himself his own life in the meanwhile, and saving up everything for the festival that was never to be, it becomes that hysterically moving sort of tragedy which lies on the confines of farce.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

JANUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH

The respectable are not led so much by any desire of applause as by a positive need for countenance. The weaker and the tamer the man, the more will he require this support; and any positive quality relieves him, by just so much, of this dependence.

Familiar Studies — Samuel Pepys.

JANUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH

That is one of the best features of the heavenly bodies, that they belong to everybody in particular.

Providence and the Guitar.

JANUARY TWENTY-NINTH

From those who mark the divisions on a scale to those who measure the boundaries of empires or the distance of the heavenly stars, it is by careful method and minute, unwearying attention that men rise even to material exactness or to sure knowledge even of external and constant things.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JANUARY THIRTIETH

It is a great thing, believe me, to present a good normal type of the nation you belong to.

An Inland Voyage.

JANUARY THIRTY-FIRST

Where a man in not the best of circumstances preserves composure of mind, and relishes ale and tobacco, and his wife and children, in the intervals of dull and unremunerative labour; where a man in this predicament can afford a lesson by the way to what are called his intellectual superiors, there is plainly something to be lost, as well as something to be gained, by teaching him to think differently.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.



FEBRUARY

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FEBRUARY FIRST

OF all unfortunates there is one creature (for I will not call him man) conspicuous in misfortune. This is he who has forfeited his birthright of expression, who has cultivated artful intonations, who has taught his face tricks, like a pet monkey, and on every side perverted or cut off his means of communication with his fellow-men.

Virginibus Puerisque.

FEBRUARY SECOND

To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of human experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions, and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

Acis Triplex.

FEBRUARY THIRD

Every book is, in an intimate sense, a circular letter to the friends of him who writes it. They alone take his meaning; they find private messages, assurances of love, and expressions of gratitude dropped for them in every corner. The public is but a generous patron who defrays the postage. Yet, though the letter is directed to all, we have an old and kindly custom of addressing it on the outside to one. Of what shall a man be proud, if he is not proud of his friends?

Letter to Sidney Colvin.

FEBRUARY FOURTH

There are duties which come before gratitude, and offences which justly divide friends, far more acquaintances.

Father Damien.

FEBRUARY FIFTH

We cannot trust ourselves to behave with decency; we cannot trust our consciences; and the remedy proposed is to elect a round number of our neighbours, pretty much at random, and say to these: "Be ye our conscience; make laws so wise, and continue from year to year to administer them so wisely, that they shall save us from ourselves and make us righteous and happy, world without end. Amen."

The Day after To-morrow.

FEBRUARY SIXTH

The longer we live, the more we perceive the sagacity of Aristotle and the other old philosophers ; and though I have all my life been eager for legitimate distinctions, I can lay my hand upon my heart, at the end of my career, and declare there is not one — no, nor yet life itself — which is worth acquiring or preserving at the slightest cost of dignity.

The Master of Ballantrae.

FEBRUARY SEVENTH

Solitude is the climax of the negative virtues. When we go to bed after a solitary day we can tell ourselves that we have not been unkind nor dishonest nor untruthful ; and the negative virtues are agreeable to that dangerous faculty we call the conscience.

Reflections and Remarks.

FEBRUARY EIGHTH

I would put a good name upon a virtue ; you will not overdo it ; they are not so enchanting in themselves.

Of Love and Politics.

FEBRUARY NINTH

Money enters in two different characters into the scheme of life. A certain amount, varying with the number and empire of our desires, is a true necessary to each one of us in the present

order of society ; but beyond that amount, money is a commodity to be bought or not to be bought, a luxury in which we may either indulge or stint ourselves, like any other. And there are many luxuries that we may legitimately prefer to it, such as a grateful conscience, a country life, or the woman of our inclination.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

FEBRUARY TENTH

It is but a lying cant that would represent the merchant and the banker as people disinterestedly toiling for mankind, and then most useful when they are most absorbed in their transactions ; for the man is more important than his services.

An Inland Voyage.

FEBRUARY ELEVENTH

It is good to have been young in youth and, as years go on, to grow older. Many are already old before they are through their teens ; but to travel deliberately through one's ages is to get the heart out of a liberal education.

Letter to William Ernest Henley.

FEBRUARY TWELFTH

On my tomb, if ever I have one, I mean to get these words inscribed : " He clung to his paddle."

An Inland Voyage.

FEBRUARY THIRTEENTH

God made them twain by intention, and brought true love into the world, to be man's hope and woman's comfort.

The Black Arrow.

FEBRUARY FOURTEENTH

Solitude for its own sake should surely never be preferred. We are bound by the strongest obligations to busy ourselves amid the world of men, if it be only to crack jokes. The finest trait in the character of St. Paul was his readiness to be damned for the salvation of anybody else. And surely we should all endure a little weariness to make one face look brighter or one hour go more pleasantly in this mixed world.

Reflections and Remarks.

FEBRUARY FIFTEENTH

A man who must separate himself from his neighbours' habits in order to be happy, is in much the same case with one who requires to take opium for the same purpose. What we want to see is one who can breast into the world, do a man's work, and still preserve his first and pure enjoyment of existence.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

FEBRUARY SIXTEENTH

Things are fit for art so far only as they are both true and apparent.

Works of Edgar Allan Poe.

FEBRUARY SEVENTEENTH

Faces have a trick of growing more and more spiritualised and abstract in the memory, until nothing remains of them but a look, a haunting expression ; just that secret quality in a face that is apt to slip out somehow under the cunningest painter's touch and leave the portrait dead for the lack of it.

An Autumn Effect.

FEBRUARY EIGHTEENTH

Late years are still in limbo to us ; but the more distant past is all that we possess in life, the corn already harvested and stored for ever in the grange of memory. . . . If I desire to live long, it is that I may have the more to look back upon.

A Retrospect.

FEBRUARY NINETEENTH

One of the things that we profess to teach our young is a respect for truth ; and I cannot think this piece of education will be crowned with any great success, so long as some of us practise and the rest openly approve of public falsehood.

Profession of Letters.

FEBRUARY TWENTIETH

If we are indeed here to perfect and complete our own natures, and grow larger, stronger, and more sympathetic against some nobler career in the future, we had all best bestir ourselves to the utmost while we have the time.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIRST

To marry is to domesticate the Recording Angel. Once you are married, there is nothing left for you, not even suicide, but to be good.

Virginibus Puerisque.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SECOND

In a man who finds all things good, you will scarce expect much zeal for negative virtues: the active alone will have a charm for him; abstinence, however wise, however kind, will always seem to such a judge entirely mean and partly impious.

Memories and Portraits.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-THIRD

Forth from the casemate, on the plain
Where honour has the world to gain,
Pour forth and bravely do your part,
O knights of the unshielded heart!
Forth and for ever forward! — out
From prudent turret and redoubt,

And in the mellay charge amain,
To fall, but yet to rise again !

Our Lady of the Snows.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FOURTH

The faults of married people continually spur up each of them, hour by hour, to do better and to meet and love upon a higher ground. And ever, between the failures, there will come glimpses of kind virtues to encourage and console.

Virginibus Puerisque.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIFTH

Blessed nature, healthy, temperate nature, abhors and exterminates excess. Human law, in this matter, imitates at a great distance her provisions; and we must strive to supplement the efforts of the law.

The Treasure of Franchard.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SIXTH

It is the business of this life to make excuses for others, but none for ourselves. We should be clearly persuaded of our own misconduct, for that is the part of knowledge in which we are most apt to be defective.

Reflections and Remarks.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH

All our arts and occupations lie wholly on the surface; it is on the surface that we perceive

their beauty, fitness, and significance; and to pry below is to be appalled by their emptiness and shocked by the coarseness of the strings and pulleys.

On Style in Literature.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH

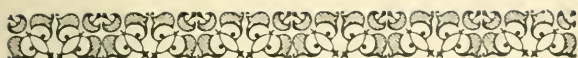
In unbeloved toils, even under the prick of necessity, no man is continually sedulous. Once eliminate the fear of starvation, once eliminate or bound the hope of riches, and we shall see plenty of skulking and malingering.

The Day after To-morrow.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-NINTH

There is something in marriage so natural and inviting, that the step has an air of great simplicity and ease; it offers to bury for ever many aching preoccupations; it is to afford us unfailing and familiar company through life; it opens up a smiling prospect of the blest and passive kind of love, rather than the blessing and active; it is approached not only through the delights of courtship, but by a public performance and repeated legal signatures. A man naturally thinks it will go hard with him if he cannot be good and fortunate and happy within such august circumvallations.

Virginibus Puerisque.



MARCH

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MARCH FIRST

IF I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness ;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face ;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not ; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain : —
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake ;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in !
The Celestial Surgeon.

MARCH SECOND

Life is so short and insecure that I would not
hurry away from any pleasure.
Markheim.

MARCH THIRD

A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of goodwill; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted.

An Apology for Idlers.

MARCH FOURTH

It is the property of things seen for the first time, or for the first time after long, like the flowers in spring, to reawaken in us the sharp edge of sense and that impression of mystic strangeness which otherwise passes out of life with the coming of years; but the sight of a loved face is what renews a man's character from the fountain upwards.

Will o' the Mill.

MARCH FIFTH

Many a man's destiny has been settled by nothing apparently more grave than a pretty face on the opposite side of the street and a couple of bad companions round the corner.

Familiar Studies — François Villon.

MARCH SIXTH

Talk should proceed by instances; by the apposite, not the expository. It should keep close along the lines of humanity, near the bosoms

and businesses of men, at the level where history, fiction, and experience intersect and illuminate each other.

Talk and Talkers.

MARCH SEVENTH

The Lion is the King of Beasts, but he is scarcely suitable for a domestic pet. In the same way, I suspect love is rather too violent a passion to make, in all cases, a good domestic sentiment.

Virginibus Puerisque.

MARCH EIGHTH

A thousand interests spring up in the process of the ages and a thousand perish; that is now an eccentricity or a lost art which was once the fashion of an empire; and those only are perennial matters that rouse us to-day, and that roused men in all epochs of the past.

Memories and Portraits.

MARCH NINTH

Our faith is not the highest truth that we perceive, but the highest that we have been able to assimilate into the very texture and method of our thinking.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

MARCH TENTH

It is as natural and as right for a young man to be imprudent and exaggerated, to live in swoops and circles, and beat about his cage like any other wild thing newly captured, as it is for old men to turn gray, or mothers to love their offspring, or heroes to die for something worthier than their lives.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

MARCH ELEVENTH

Love is not love that cannot build a home. And you call it love to grudge and quarrel and pick faults?

Of Love and Politics.

MARCH TWELFTH

The race of man, like that indomitable nature whence it sprang, has medicating virtues of its own; the years and seasons bring various harvests; the sun returns after the rain; and mankind outlives secular animosities, as a single man awakens from the passions of a day.

The Country of the Camisards.

MARCH THIRTEENTH

When people serve the kingdom of heaven with a pass-book in their hands, I should always be afraid lest they should carry the same commercial

spirit into their dealings with their fellow-men, which would make a sad and sordid business of this life.

Down the Oise.

MARCH FOURTEENTH

It is easy to be a conservator of the discomforts of others ; indeed, it is only our good qualities we find it irksome to conserve.

Old Town.

MARCH FIFTEENTH

It is true that we might do a vast amount of good if we were wealthy, but it is also highly improbable ; not many do ; and the art of growing rich is not only quite distinct from that of doing good, but the practice of the one does not at all train a man for practising the other.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

MARCH SIXTEENTH

We reckon our lives, I hardly know why, from the date of our first sorry appearance in society, as if from a first humiliation ; for no actor can come upon the stage with a worse grace.

The Treasure of Franchard.

MARCH SEVENTEENTH

I am sorry indeed that I have no Greek, but I should be sorrier still if I were dead ; nor do I

know the name of that branch of knowledge which is worth acquiring at the price of a brain fever.

Some College Memories.

MARCH EIGHTEENTH

O toiling hands of mortals ! O unwearied feet, travelling ye know not whither ! Soon, soon, it seems to you, you must come forth on some conspicuous hilltop, and but a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness ; for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour.

El Dorado.

MARCH NINETEENTH

It is only by trying to understand others that we can get our own hearts understood ; and in matters of human feeling the clement judge is the most successful pleader.

Virginibus Puerisque.

MARCH TWENTIETH

The truth that is suppressed by friends is the readiest weapon of the enemy.

Father Damien.

MARCH TWENTY-FIRST

Wherever we are, it is but a stage on the way to somewhere else, and whatever we do, however well we do it, it is only a preparation to do something else that shall be different.

Letters from Samoa to Young People.

MARCH TWENTY-SECOND

It is perhaps one of the most touching things in human nature, as it is a commonplace of psychology, that when a man has just lost hope or confidence in one love, he is then most eager to find and lean upon another.

Some Aspects of Robert Burns.

MARCH TWENTY-THIRD

No considerate man can approach marriage without deep concern. I, he will think, who have made hitherto so poor a business of my own life, am now about to embrace the responsibility of another's. Henceforth, there shall be two to suffer from my faults; and that other is the one whom I most desire to shield from suffering. In view of our impotence and folly, it seems an act of presumption to involve another's destiny with ours.

Reflections and Remarks.

MARCH TWENTY-FOURTH

We speak of hardships, but the true hardship is to be a dull fool, and permitted to mismanage life in our own dull and foolish manner.

Our Lady of the Snows.

MARCH TWENTY-FIFTH

Alas, as we get up in life, and are more pre-occupied with our affairs, even a holiday is a thing that must be worked for.

Travels with a Donkey.

MARCH TWENTY-SIXTH

We are apt to make so much of the tragedy of death, and think so little of the enduring tragedy of some men's lives, that we see more to lament for in a life cut off in the midst of usefulness and love, than in one that miserably survives all love and usefulness, and goes about the world the phantom of itself, without hope, or joy, or any consolation.

An Autumn Effect.

MARCH TWENTY-SEVENTH

While we have little to try us, we are angry with little; small annoyances do not bear their justification on their faces; but when we are overtaken by a great sorrow or perplexity, the

greatness of our concern sobers us so that we see more clearly and think with more consideration.

Reflections and Remarks.

MARCH TWENTY-EIGHTH

Pinches, buffets, the glow of hope, the shock of disappointment, furious contention with obstacles: these are the true elixir for all vital spirits, these are what they seek alike in their romantic enterprises and their unromantic dissipations.

The Day after To-morrow.

MARCH TWENTY-NINTH

Without fresh air, you only require a bad heart, and a remarkable command of the Queen's English, to become such another as Dean Swift.

Across the Plains.

MARCH THIRTIETH

On the whole, the most religious exercise for the aged is probably to recall their own experience; so many friends dead, so many hopes disappointed, so many slips and stumbles, and withal so many bright days and smiling providences; there is surely the matter of a very eloquent sermon in this.

An Inland Voyage.

MARCH THIRTY-FIRST

By the report of our elders, this nervous preparation for old age is only trouble thrown away. We fall on guard, and after all it is a friend who comes to meet us. After the sun is down and the west faded, the heavens begin to fill with shining stars. So, as we grow old, a sort of equable jog-trot of feeling is substituted for the violent ups and downs of passion and disgust; the same influence that restrains our hopes, quiets our apprehensions; if the pleasures are less intense, the troubles are milder and more tolerable; and in a word, this period for which we are asked to hoard up everything as for a time of famine, is, in its own right, the richest, easiest, and happiest of life.

Crabbed Age and Youth.



APRIL

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APRIL FIRST

SUCH things as honour and love and faith are not only nobler than food and drink, but indeed I think we desire them more and suffer more sharply for their absence.

A Lodging for the Night.

APRIL SECOND

An oath, so light a thing to swear, so grave a thing to break : an oath, taken in the heat of youth, repented with what sobbings of the heart, but yet in vain repented, as the years go on : an oath, that was once the very utterance of the truth of God, but that falls to be the symbol of a meaningless and empty slavery ; such is the yoke that many young men joyfully assume, and under whose dead weight they live to suffer worse than death.

The Spirited Old Lady.

APRIL THIRD

It seems as if marriage were the royal road through life, and realised, on the instant, what we

have all dreamed on summer Sundays when the bells ring, or at night when we cannot sleep for the desire of living.

Virginibus Puerisque.

APRIL FOURTH

Most men, finding themselves the authors of their own disgrace, rail the louder against God or destiny. Most men, when they repent, oblige their friends to share the bitterness of that repentance.

Memories and Portraits.

APRIL FIFTH

It is a sore thing to have laboured long and scaled the arduous hilltops, and when all is done, find humanity indifferent to your achievement.

An Apology for Idlers.

APRIL SIXTH

The first duty of man is to speak ; that is his chief business in this world ; and talk, which is the harmonious speech of two or more, is by far the most accessible of pleasures. It costs nothing in money ; it is all profit ; it completes our education, founds and fosters our friendships, and can be enjoyed at any age and in almost any state of health.

Talk and Talkers.

APRIL SEVENTH

Day by day we perfect ourselves in the art of seeing nature more favourably. We learn to live with her, as people learn to live with fretful or violent spouses: to dwell lovingly on what is good, and shut our eyes against all that is bleak or inharmonious.

Unpleasant Places.

APRIL EIGHTH

It is the mark of a modest man to accept his friendly circle ready-made from the hands of opportunity.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

APRIL NINTH

People who share a cell in the Bastille, or are thrown together on an uninhabited isle, if they do not immediately fall to fisticuffs, will find some possible ground of compromise. They will learn each other's ways and humours, so as to know where they must go warily, and where they may lean their whole weight. The discretion of the first years becomes the settled habit of the last; and so, with wisdom and patience, two lives may grow indissolubly into one.

Virginibus Puerisque.

APRIL TENTH

We do not go to cowards for tender dealing ; there is nothing so cruel as panic ; the man who has least fear for his own carcase, has most time to consider others.

Aes Triplex.

APRIL ELEVENTH

I am not afraid of the truth, if any one could tell it me, but I am afraid of parts of it impertinently uttered.

Profession of Letters.

APRIL TWELFTH

Age asks with timidity to be spared intolerable pain ; youth, taking fortune by the beard, demands joy like a right.

The Dynamiter.

APRIL THIRTEENTH

The devil is only a very weak spirit before God's truth, and all his subtleties vanish at a word of true honour, like darkness at morning.

New Arabian Nights.

APRIL FOURTEENTH

To love a character is only the heroic way of understanding it. When we love, by some noble method of our own or some nobility of mien or nature in the other, we apprehend the loved one by what is noblest in ourselves. When we are merely studying an eccentricity,

the method of our study is but a series of allowances. To begin to understand is to begin to sympathise; for comprehension comes only when we have stated another's faults and virtues in terms of our own.

The Story of a Lie.

APRIL FIFTEENTH

There is an obligation in happiness.

The Master of Ballantrae.

APRIL SIXTEENTH

Deeds are what I ask; kind deeds and words — that's the true-blue piety: to hope the best and do the best, and speak the kindest.

Admiral Guinea.

APRIL SEVENTEENTH

O, to be up and doing, O
Unfearing and unashamed to go
In all the uproar and the press
About my human business!

Our Lady of the Snows.

APRIL EIGHTEENTH

To do anything because others do it, and not because the thing is good, or kind, or honest in its own right, is to resign all moral control and captaincy upon yourself, and go post-haste to the devil with the greater number.

Familiar Studies—Samuel Pepys.

APRIL NINETEENTH

When things fall out opportunely for the person concerned, he is not apt to be critical about the how or why, his own immediate personal convenience seeming a sufficient reason for the strangest oddities and revolutions in our sub-lunary things.

The Sire de Malétrait's Door.

APRIL TWENTIETH

We must not, in things temporal, take from those who have little, the little that they have.

On Style in Literature.

APRIL TWENTY-FIRST

All the puling sorrows, all the carking repentance, all this talk of duty that is no duty, in the great peace, in the pure daylight of these woods, fall away from you like a garment.

Forest Notes.

APRIL TWENTY-SECOND

Our right to live, to eat, to share in mankind's pleasures, lies precisely in this: that we must be persuaded we can on the whole live rather beneficially than hurtfully to others. Remove this persuasion, and the man has lost his right. That persuasion is our dearest jewel, to which

we must sacrifice the life itself to which it entitles us. For it is better to be dead than degraded.

Reflections and Remarks.

APRIL TWENTY-THIRD

A new creed, like a new country, is an unhomely place of sojourn ; but it makes men lean on one another and join hands.

Familiar Studies — John Knox.

APRIL TWENTY-FOURTH

I have always thought drunkenness a wild and almost fearful pleasure, rather demoniacal than human.

The Merry Men.

APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH

All the world imagine they will be exceptional when they grow wealthy ; but possession is debasing, new desires spring up ; and the silly taste for ostentation eats out the heart of pleasure.

The Treasure of Franchard.

APRIL TWENTY-SIXTH

The virtues we admire in the saint and the hero are the fruits of a happy constitution. You, for your part, must not think you will ever be a good man, for these are born and not made. You will have your own reward, if you keep

on growing better than you were — how do I say? — if you do not keep on growing worse.

Reflections and Remarks.

APRIL TWENTY-SEVENTH

The habitual liar may be a very honest fellow, and live truly with his wife and friends; while another man who never told a formal falsehood in his life may yet be himself one lie — heart and face, from top to bottom.

Virginibus Puerisque.

APRIL TWENTY-EIGHTH

Man is an idle animal. He is at least as intelligent as the ant; but generations of advisers have in vain recommended him the ant's example.

The Day after To-morrow.

APRIL TWENTY-NINTH

Some thoughts, which sure would be the most beautiful, vanish before we can rightly scan their features; as though a god, travelling by our green highways, should but open the door, give one smiling look into the house, and go again for ever.

The Country of the Camisards.

APRIL THIRTIETH

Nothing is given for nothing in this world; there can be no true love, even on your own side, without devotion; devotion is the exercise of love, by which it grows; but if you will give enough of that, if you will pay the price in a sufficient "amount of what you call life," why then, indeed, whether with wife or comrade, you may have months and even years of such easy, natural, pleasurable, and yet improving intercourse as shall make time a moment and kindness a delight.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.



MAY

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MAY FIRST

IT is really very disheartening how we depend on other people in this life.

The Silverado Squatters.

MAY SECOND

It is not well to think of death, unless we temper the thought with that of heroes who despised it. Upon what ground, is of small account; if it be only the bishop who was burned for his faith in the antipodes, his memory lightens the heart and makes us walk undisturbed among graves. And so the martyrs' monument is a wholesome, heartsome spot in the field of the dead; and as we look upon it, a brave influence comes to us from the land of those who have won their discharge and, in another phrase of Patrick Walker's, got "cleanly off the stage."

Greyfriars.

MAY THIRD

Those who can avoid toil altogether and dwell in the Arcadia of private means, and even those

who can, by abstinence, reduce the necessary amount of it to some six weeks a year, having the more liberty, have only the higher moral obligation to be up and doing in the interest of man.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

MAY FOURTH

Sin, my dear young friend, sin is the sole calamity that a wise man should apprehend.

Fable of the Yellow Paint.

MAY FIFTH

We all have by our bedsides the box of the Merchant Abudah, thank God, securely enough shut ; but when a young man sacrifices sleep to labour, let him have a care, for he is playing with the lock.

Some College Memories.

MAY SIXTH

The purely wise are silenced by facts ; they talk in a clear atmosphere, problems lying around them like a view in nature ; if they can be shown to be somewhat in the wrong, they digest the reproof like a thrashing, and make better intellectual blood.

Talk and Talkers.

MAY SEVENTH

A certain sort of talent is almost indispensable for people who would spend years together and not bore themselves to death. But the talent, like the agreement, must be for and about life. To dwell happily together, they should be versed in the niceties of the heart, and born with a faculty for willing compromise.

Virginibus Puerisque.

MAY EIGHTH

In every part and corner of our life, to lose oneself is to be gainer; to forget oneself is to be happy.

Old Mortality.

MAY NINTH

Life is only a very dull and ill-directed theatre unless we have some interests in the piece; and to those who have neither art nor science, the world is a mere arrangement of colours, or a rough footway where they may very well break their shins.

El Dorado.

MAY TENTH

The ignorance of your middle class surprises me. Outside itself, it thinks the world to lie quite ignorant and equal, sunk in a common degradation; but to the eye of the observer,

all ranks are seen to stand in ordered hierarchies, and each adorned with its particular aptitudes and knowledge.

The Dynamiter.

MAY ELEVENTH

When it comes to be a question of each man doing his own share or the rest doing more, prettiness of sentiment will be forgotten. To dock the skulker's food is not enough; many will rather eat haws and starve on petty pilferings than put their shoulder to the wheel for one hour daily.

The Day after To-morrow.

MAY TWELFTH

There is not a juncture in to-day's affairs but some useful word may yet be said of it.

Profession of Letters.

MAY THIRTEENTH

In this mixed world, if you can find one or two sensible places in a man; above all, if you should find a whole family living together on such pleasant terms, you may surely be satisfied, and take the rest for granted; or, what is a great deal better, boldly make up your mind that you can do perfectly well without the rest, and that ten thousand bad traits cannot make a single good one any the less good.

Pont-sur-Sambre.

MAY FOURTEENTH

Whether people's gratitude for the good gifts that come to them be wisely conceived or dutifully expressed is a secondary matter, after all, so long as they feel gratitude.

Down the Oise.

MAY FIFTEENTH

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of nature.

Travels with a Donkey.

MAY SIXTEENTH

I have never thought it easy to be just, and find it daily even harder than I thought.

The Country of the Camisards.

MAY SEVENTEENTH

We all suffer ourselves to be too much concerned about a little poverty; but such considerations should not move us in the choice of that which is to be the business and justification of so great a portion of our lives; and like the missionary, the patriot, or the philosopher, we should all choose that poor and brave career in which we can do the most and best for mankind.

Profession of Letters.

MAY EIGHTEENTH

The seductions of life are strong in every age and station; we make idols of our affections, idols of our customary virtues; we are content to avoid the inconvenient wrong and to forego the inconvenient right with almost equal self-approval, until at last we make a home for our conscience among the negative virtues and the cowardly vices.

Byways of Book Illustration.

MAY NINETEENTH

This is one of the lessons of travel — that some of the strangest races dwell next door to you at home.

Across the Plains.

MAY TWENTIETH

It is salutary to get out of ourselves and see people living together in perfect unconsciousness of our existence, as they will live when we are gone.

An Autumn Effect.

MAY TWENTY-FIRST

The ways of men seem always very trivial to us when we find ourselves alone on a church top, with the blue sky and a few tall pinnacles, and see far below us the steep roofs and foreshortened buttresses, and the silent activity of the city streets.

Unpleasant Places.

MAY TWENTY-SECOND

It is easy to be virtuous when one's own convenience is not affected; and it is no shame to any man to follow the advice of an outsider who owns that, while he sees which is the better part, he might not have the courage to profit himself by this opinion.

To the Clergy.

MAY TWENTY-THIRD

Here we have no continuing city; and as for the eternal, it's a comfortable thought that we have other merits than our own.

Prince Errant.

MAY TWENTY-FOURTH

When we discover that we can be no longer true, the next best is to be kind.

Some Aspects of Robert Burns.

MAY TWENTY-FIFTH

The Lord is Lord of might;
In deeds, in deeds, he takes delight;
The plough, the spear, the laden barks
The field, the founded city, marks;
He marks the smiler of the streets,
The singer upon garden seats;
He sees the climber in the rocks:
To him the shepherd folds his flocks.

Our Lady of the Snows.

MAY TWENTY-SIXTH

Love, like the shadow of a great rock, should lend shelter and refreshment, not to the lover only, but to his mistress and to the children that reward them; and their very friends should seek repose in the fringes of that peace.

Of Love and Politics.

MAY TWENTY-SEVENTH

All have some fault. The fault of each grinds down the hearts of those about him, and — let us not blink the truth — hurries both him and them into the grave.

Preface to Familiar Studies.

MAY TWENTY-EIGHTH

We sin, I dare not say by His temptation, but I must say with His consent; and to any but the brutish man his sins are the beginning of wisdom.

The Merry Men.

MAY TWENTY-NINTH

We are told by men of science that all the ventures of mariners on the sea, all that counter-marching of tribes and races that confounds old history with its dust and rumour, sprang from nothing more abstruse than the laws of supply and demand, and a certain natural instinct for cheap rations.

Will o' the Mill.

MAY THIRTIETH

Justice is but an earthly currency, paid to appearances; you may see another superficially righted; but be sure he has got too little or too much; and in your own case rest content with what is paid you. It is more just than you suppose; that your virtues are misunderstood is a price you pay to keep your meannesses concealed.

Reflections and Remarks.

MAY THIRTY-FIRST

The unattainable is not truly unattainable when we can make the beauty of it our own.

Lord Lytton's Fables.



JUNE

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JUNE FIRST

TO the gratitude that becomes us in this life, I can set no limit. Though we steer after a fashion, yet we must sail according to the winds and currents. After what I have done, what might I not have done? That I have still the courage to attempt my life, that I am not now overladen with dishonours, to whom do I owe it but to the gentle ordering of circumstances in the great design? More has not been done to me than I can bear; I have been marvellously restrained and helped: not unto us, O Lord!

Gratitude to God.

JUNE SECOND

A man must not deny his manifest abilities, for that is to evade his obligations.

The Treasure of Franchard.

JUNE THIRD

The man of very regular conduct is too often a prig, if he be not worse—a rabbi. I, for my part, want to be startled out of my conceits; I

want to be put to shame in my own eyes ; I want to feel the bridle in my mouth, and be continually reminded of my own weakness and the omnipotence of circumstances.

Reflections and Remarks.

JUNE FOURTH

Honour is a diamond cut in a thousand facets,
and with the true fire in each.

Beau Austin.

JUNE FIFTH

Those he approves that ply the trade,
That rock the child, that wed the maid,
That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
And still with laughter, song, and shout,
Spin the great wheel of earth about.

Our Lady of the Snows.

JUNE SIXTH

It is all very fine to talk about tramps and morality. . . . As long as you keep in the upper regions, with all the world bowing to you as you go, social arrangements have a very handsome air ; but once get under the wheels and you wish society were at the devil. I will give most respectable men a fortnight of such a life, and then I will offer them twopence for what remains of their morality.

An Inland Voyage.

JUNE SEVENTH

The best that we find in our travels is an honest friend. He is a fortunate voyager who finds many. We travel, indeed, to find them. They are the end and the reward of life. They keep us worthy of ourselves ; and when we are alone, we are only nearer to the absent.

Letters to Sydney Colvin.

JUNE EIGHTH

We like to have, in our great men, something that is above question ; we like to place an implicit faith in them, and see them always on the platform of their greatness.

Victor Hugo's Romances.

JUNE NINTH

Outdoor rustic people have not many ideas, but such as they have are hardy plants and thrive flourishingly in persecution. One who has grown a long while in the sweat of laborious noons, and under the stars at night, a frequenter of hills and forests, an old honest countryman, has, in the end, a sense of communion with the powers of the universe, and amicable relations towards his God.

Travels with a Donkey.

JUNE TENTH

We do our good and bad with a high hand and almost offensively; and make even our alms a witness-bearing and an act of war against the wrong.

An Inland Voyage.

JUNE ELEVENTH

We may be unjust, but when a man despises commerce and philanthropy alike, and has views of good so soaring that he must take himself apart from mankind for their cultivation, we will not be content without some striking act.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

JUNE TWELFTH

The journalist is not reckoned an important officer; yet judge of the good he might do, by the harm he does.

Profession of Letters.

JUNE THIRTEENTH

The spice of life is battle; the friendliest relations are still a kind of contest; and if we would not forego all that is valuable in our lot, we must continually face some other person, eye to eye, and wrestle a fall whether in love or enmity.

Talk and Talkers.

JUNE FOURTEENTH

We shall always shock each other both in life and art ; we cannot get the sun into our pictures, nor the abstract right (if there be such a thing) into our books ; enough if, in the one, there glimmer some hint of the great light that blinds us from heaven ; enough, if, on the other, there shine, even upon foul details, a spirit of magnanimity.

Memories and Portraits.

JUNE FIFTEENTH

The best of men and the best of women may sometimes live together all their lives, and for want of some consent on fundamental questions, hold each other lost spirits to the end.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JUNE SIXTEENTH

Most of our pocket wisdom is conceived for the use of mediocre people, to discourage them from ambitious attempts, and generally console them in their mediocrity.

Grabbed Age and Youth.

JUNE SEVENTEENTH

Idleness so called, which does not consist in doing nothing, but in doing a great deal not recognised in the dogmatic formularies of the

ruling class, has as good a right to state its position as industry itself.

An Apology for Idlers.

JUNE EIGHTEENTH

No man can find out the world, says Solomon, from beginning to end, because the world is in his heart; and so it is impossible for any of us to understand, from beginning to end, that agreement of harmonious circumstances that creates in us the highest pleasure of admiration, precisely because some of these circumstances are hidden from us for ever in the constitution of our own bodies.

Ordered South.

JUNE NINETEENTH

People usually do things and suffer martyrdoms, because they have an inclination that way.

The English Admirals.

JUNE TWENTIETH

There are two reasons for the choice of any way of life: the first is inbred taste in the chooser; the second some high utility in the industry selected.

Profession of Letters.

JUNE TWENTY-FIRST

To sit still and contemplate, — to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the great deeds of men without envy, to be everything and everywhere in sympathy, and yet content to remain where and what you are — is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness? After all, it is not they who carry flags, but they who look upon it from a private chamber, who have the fun of the procession.

Walking Tours.

JUNE TWENTY-SECOND

There 's such a thing as a man being pious and honest in the private way; and there is such a thing, sir, as a public virtue; but when a man has neither, the Lord lighten him!

Prince Errant.

JUNE TWENTY-THIRD

The average man lives, and must live, so wholly in convention, that gunpowder charges of the truth are more apt to discompose than to invigorate his creed.

Books which have Influenced me.

JUNE TWENTY-FOURTH

Better that our serene temples were deserted than filled with trafficking and juggling priests.

Profession of Letters.

JUNE TWENTY-FIFTH

The character of a place is often most perfectly expressed in its associations. An event strikes root and grows into a legend, when it has happened amongst congenial surroundings. Ugly actions, above all in ugly places, have the true romantic quality, and become an undying property of their scene.

Legends.

JUNE TWENTY-SIXTH

So long as men do their duty, even if it be greatly in a misapprehension, they will be leading pattern lives; and whether or not they come to lie beside a martyrs' monument, we may be sure they will find a safe haven somewhere in the providence of God.

Greyfriars.

JUNE TWENTY-SEVENTH

You have perhaps only one friend in the world in whose esteem it is worth while for you to right yourself. Justification to indifferent persons is, at best, an impertinent intrusion. Let them think what they please; they will be the more likely to forgive you in the end.

Reflections and Remarks.

JUNE TWENTY-EIGHTH

There is a duty to the living more important than any charity to the dead.

Works of Edgar Allan Poe.

JUNE TWENTY-NINTH

There are strange depths of idleness in man, a too-easily-got sufficiency, as in the case of the sago-eaters, often quenching the desire for all besides ; and it is possible that the men of the richest ant-heaps may sink even into squalor.

The Day after To-morrow.

JUNE THIRTIETH

I am not so blind but that I know I might be a murderer or even a traitor to-morrow ; and now, as if I were not already too feelingly alive to my misdeeds, I must choose out the one person whom I most desire to please, and make her the daily witness of my failures, I must give a part in all my dishonours to the one person who can feel them more keenly than myself. In all our daring, magnanimous human way of life, I find nothing more bold than this. To go into battle is but a small thing by comparison. It is the last act of committal. After that, there is no way left, not even suicide, but to be a good man.

Reflections and Remarks.



JULY

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JULY FIRST

THIS world in itself is but a painful and uneasy place of residence, and lasting happiness, at least to the self-conscious, comes only from within.

Familiar Studies—Thoreau.

JULY SECOND

The farmer's life is natural and simple; but the prince's is both artificial and complicated. It is easy to do right in the one, and exceedingly difficult not to do wrong in the other. If your crop is blighted, you can take off your bonnet and say, "God's will be done;" but if the prince meets with a reverse, he may have to blame himself for the attempt. And perhaps, if all the kings in Europe were to confine themselves to innocent amusement, the subjects would be the better off.

Prince Errant.

JULY THIRD

Out of the strong comes forth sweetness; but an ill thing poorly done is an ill thing top and bottom.

Profession of Letters.

JULY FOURTH

Any man can see and understand a picture; it is reserved for the few to separate anything out of the confusion of nature, and see that distinctly and with intelligence.

An Autumn Effect.

JULY FIFTH

The future is nothing; but the past is myself, my own history, the seed of my present thoughts, the mould of my present disposition. It is not in vain that I return to the nothings of my childhood; for every one of them has left some stamp upon me or put some fetter on my boasted free-will. In the past is my present fate; and in the past also is my real life.

A Retrospect.

JULY SIXTH

The forest is by itself, and forest life owns small kinship with life in the dismal land of labour. Men are so far sophisticated that they cannot take the world as it is given to them by the sight of their eyes. Not only what they see

and hear, but what they know to be behind,
enter into their notion of a place.

Forest Notes.

JULY SEVENTH

A time comes for all men when the helm is
taken out of their hands.

Will o' the Mill.

JULY EIGHTH

For my part, I am body and soul with the
women; and after a well-married couple, there
is nothing so beautiful in the world as the myth
of the divine huntress.

An Inland Voyage.

JULY NINTH

It is not easy to say who know the Lord; and it
is none of our business. Protestants and Cath-
olics, and even those who worship stones, may
know Him and be known of Him; for He has
made all.

The Country of the Camisards.

JULY TENTH

There is no friendship so noble, but it is the
product of time; and a world of little finical ob-
servances, and little frail proprieties and fashions
of the hour, go to make or to mar, to stint or to
perfect, the union of spirits the most loving and
the most intolerant of such interference.

Familiar Studies — John Knox.

JULY ELEVENTH

What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield.

Travels with a Donkey.

JULY TWELFTH

Alas! I fear every man and woman of us is "greatly dark" to all their neighbours, from the day of birth until death removes them, in their greatest virtues as well as in their saddest faults.

Some Aspects of Robert Burns.

JULY THIRTEENTH

No measure comes before Parliament but it has been long ago prepared by the grand jury of the talkers; no book is written that has not been largely composed by their assistance.

Talk and Talkers.

JULY FOURTEENTH

That people should laugh over the same sort of jests, and have many a story of "grouse in the gun room," many an old joke between them which time cannot wither nor custom stale, is a better preparation for life, by your leave, than many other things higher and better sounding in the world's ears. You could read Kant by

yourself, if you wanted; but you must share a joke with some one else.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JULY FIFTEENTH

All sorts of allowances are made for the illusions of youth; and none, or almost none, for the disenchantments of age.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

JULY SIXTEENTH

An inquiry must be in some acknowledged direction, with a name to go by; or else you are not inquiring at all, only lounging; and the work-house is too good for you.

An Apology for Idlers.

JULY SEVENTEENTH

We admire splendid views and great pictures; and yet what is truly admirable is rather the mind within us, that gathers together these scattered details for its delight, and makes out of certain colours, certain distributions of graduated light and darkness, that intelligible whole which alone we call a picture or a view.

Ordered South.

JULY EIGHTEENTH

A man should be ashamed to take his food if he has not alchemy enough in his stomach to turn some of it into intense and enjoyable occupation.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

JULY NINETEENTH

Discomfort, when it is honestly uncomfortable and makes no nauseous pretensions to the contrary, is a vastly humorous business; and people well steeped and stupefied in the open air are in a good vein for laughter.

Inland Voyage.

JULY TWENTIETH

Shut your eyes hard against the recollection of your sins. Do not be afraid, you will not be able to forget them.

Reflections and Remarks.

JULY TWENTY-FIRST

Now, what I like so much in France is the clear, unflinching recognition by everybody of his own luck. They all know on which side their bread is buttered, and take a pleasure in showing it to others, which is surely the better part of religion. And they scorn to make a poor mouth over their poverty, which I take to be the better part of manliness.

Sambre and Oise Canal.

JULY TWENTY-SECOND

I could never fathom how a man dares to lift up his voice to preach in a cathedral. What is he to say that will not be an anti-climax? For though I have heard a considerable variety of sermons, I never yet heard one that was so

expressive as a cathedral. . . . Like all good preachers, it sets you preaching to yourself, — and every man is his own doctor of divinity in the last resort.

Noyon Cathedral.

JULY TWENTY-THIRD

Leave not, my soul, the unfoughten field, nor
leave

Thy debts dishonoured, nor thy place desert
Without due service rendered.

Underwoods.

JULY TWENTY-FOURTH

It is through our affections that we are smitten
with the true pain, even the pain that kills.

Admiral Guinea.

JULY TWENTY-FIFTH

Whatever keeps a man in the front garden,
whatever checks wandering fancy and all inordinate ambition, whatever makes for lounging and contentment, makes just so surely for domestic happiness.

Virginibus Puerisque.

JULY TWENTY-SIXTH

There can be no fairer ambition than to excel in talk ; to be affable, gay, ready, clear, and welcome ; to have a fact, a thought, or an illustration, pat to every subject ; and not only to cheer the flight of time among our intimates, but bear our

part in that great international congress, always sitting, where public wrongs are first declared, public errors first corrected, and the course of public opinion shaped, day by day, a little nearer to the right.

Talk and Talkers.

JULY TWENTY-SEVENTH

The gift of reading, as I have called it, is not very common, nor very generally understood. It consists, first of all, in a vast intellectual endowment — a free grace, I find I must call it — by which a man rises to understand that he is not punctually right, nor those from whom he differs absolutely wrong.

Books which have Influenced me.

JULY TWENTY-EIGHTH

Good food, honest wine, a grateful conscience, and a little pleasant chat before a man retires, are worth all the possets and apothecary's drugs.

Prince Errant.

JULY TWENTY-NINTH

Waiting is good hunting, and when the teeth are shut the tongue is at home.

Fable of the Touchstone.

JULY THIRTIETH

The love of parents for their children is, of all natural affections, the most ill-starred. It is not a love for the person, since it begins before the person has come into the world, and founds on an imaginary character and looks. Thus it is foredoomed to disappointment ; and because the parent either looks for too much, or at least for something inappropriate, at his offsprings' hands, it is too often insufficiently repaid. The natural bond, besides, is stronger from parent to child than from child to parent ; and it is the side which confers benefits, not which receives them, that thinks most of a relation.

Reflections and Remarks.

JULY THIRTY-FIRST

I would not willingly have to do with even a police constable in any other spirit than that of kindness.

The Day after To-morrow.



AUGUST

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AUGUST FIRST

IT is a difficult matter to make the most of any given place, and we have much in our own power. Things looked at patiently from one side after another generally end by showing a side that is beautiful.

Unpleasant Places.

AUGUST SECOND

Dilettante is now a term of reproach; but there is a certain form of dilettantism to which no one can object. It is this that we want among our students. We wish them to abandon no subject until they have seen and felt its merit—to act under a general interest in all branches of knowledge, not a commercial eagerness to excel in one.

The Modern Student.

AUGUST THIRD

It is to be hoped that a numerous and enterprising generation of writers will follow and surpass the present one; but it would be better if the

stream were stayed, and the roll of our old, honest, English books were closed, than that esurient bookmakers should continue to debase a brave tradition and lower, in their own eyes, a famous race.

Profession of Letters.

AUGUST FOURTH

There is a day appointed for all when they shall turn again upon their own philosophy.

Of Love and Politics.

AUGUST FIFTH

Life is a business we are all apt to mismanage; either living recklessly from day to day, or suffering ourselves to be gulled out of our moments by the inanities of custom. We should despise a man who gave as little activity and forethought to the conduct of any other business. But in this, which is the one thing of all others, since it contains them all, we cannot see the forest for the trees.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

AUGUST SIXTH

People connected with literature and philosophy are busy all their days in getting rid of second-hand notions and false standards. It is their profession, in the sweat of their brows, by dogged thinking, to recover their old fresh view

of life, and distinguish what they really and originally like from what they have only learned to tolerate perforce.

An Inland Voyage.

AUGUST SEVENTH

It is a good rule to be on your guard wherever you hear great professions about a very little piece of virtue.

Down the Oise.

AUGUST EIGHTH

Charity begins blindfold; and only through a series of similar misapprehensions rises at length into a settled principle of love and patience, and a firm belief in all our fellow-men.

Travels with a Donkey.

AUGUST NINTH

The positive virtues are imperfect; they are even ugly in their imperfection: for man's acts, by the necessity of his being, are coarse and mingled. The kindest, in the course of a day of active kindnesses, will say some things rudely, and do some things cruelly; the most honourable, perhaps, trembles at his nearness to a doubtful act.

Reflections and Remarks.

AUGUST TENTH

Though we should be grateful for good houses, there is, after all, no house like God's out-of-doors. And lastly, sir, it quiets a man down like saying his prayers.

Prince Errant.

AUGUST ELEVENTH

To conceal a sentiment, if you are sure you hold it, is to take a liberty with truth. There is probably no point of view possible to a sane man but contains some truth and, in the true connection, might be profitable to the race.

Profession of Letters.

AUGUST TWELFTH

Literature in many of its branches is no other than the shadow of good talk; but the imitation falls far short of the original in life, freedom, and effect.

Talk and Talkers.

AUGUST THIRTEENTH

It is more important that a person should be a good gossip, and talk pleasantly and smartly of common friends and the thousand and one nothings of the day and hour, than that she should speak with the tongues of men and angels; for a while together by the fire, happens

more frequently in marriage than the presence of a distinguished foreigner to dinner.

Virginibus Puerisque.

AUGUST FOURTEENTH

Our affections and beliefs are wiser than we ; the best that is in us is better than we can understand ; for it is grounded beyond experience, and guides us, blindfold, but safe, from one age on to another.

Letter to William Ernest Henley.

AUGUST FIFTEENTH

The study of conduct has to do with grave problems ; not every action should be higgled over ; one of the leading virtues therein is to let oneself alone. But if you make it your chief employment, you are sure to meddle too much.

Reflections and Remarks.

AUGUST SIXTEENTH

All opinions, properly so called, are stages on the road to truth. It does not follow that a man will travel any further ; but if he has really considered the world and drawn a conclusion, he has travelled as far.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

AUGUST SEVENTEENTH

There is certainly some chill and arid knowledge to be found upon the summits of formal and laborious science ; but it is all round about you, and for the trouble of looking, that you will acquire the warm and palpitating facts of life.

An Apology for Idlers.

AUGUST EIGHTEENTH

An aspiration is a joy for ever, a possession as solid as a landed estate, a fortune which we can never exhaust and which gives us year by year a revenue of pleasurable activity. To have many of these is to be spiritually rich.

El Dorado.

AUGUST NINETEENTH

The child, the seed, the grain of corn,
The acorn on the hill,
Each for some separate end is born
In season fit, and still
Each must in strength arise to work
The almighty will.

Underwoods.

AUGUST TWENTIETH

Education, philosophers are agreed, is the most philosophical of duties.

The Treasure of Franchard.

AUGUST TWENTY-FIRST

Let my life, then, flow like common lives, each pain rewarded with some pleasure, some pleasure linked with some pain : nothing pure whether for good or evil : and my husband, like myself, and all the rest of us, only a poor kind-hearted sinner, striving for the better part. What more could any woman ask ?

Admiral Guinea.

AUGUST TWENTY-SECOND

The self-made man is the funniest wind-bag after all ! There is a marked difference between decreeing light in chaos, and lighting the gas in a metropolitan back-parlor with a box of patent matches ; and, do what we will, there is always something made to our hand, if it were only our fingers.

Down the Oise.

AUGUST TWENTY-THIRD

You can forgive people who do not follow you through a philosophical disquisition ; but to find your wife laughing when you had tears in your eyes, or staring when you were in a fit of laughter, would go some way towards a dissolution of the marriage.

Virginibus Puerisque.

AUGUST TWENTY-FOURTH

Each man should learn what is within him, that he may strive to mend; he must be taught what is without him, that he may be kind to others.

Profession of Letters.

AUGUST TWENTY-FIFTH

We must all work for the sake of work; we must all work, as Thoreau says again, in any "absorbing pursuit — it does not much matter what, so it be honest;" but the most profitable work is that which combines into one continued effort the largest proportion of the powers and desires of a man's nature; that into which he will plunge with ardour, and from which he will desist with reluctance; in which he will know the weariness of fatigue, but not that of satiety; and which will be ever fresh, pleasing, and stimulating to his taste. Such work holds a man together, braced at all points; it does not suffer him to doze or wander; it keeps him actively conscious of himself, yet raised among superior interests; it gives him the profit of industry with the pleasures of a pastime.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

AUGUST TWENTY-SIXTH

We are all for tootling on the sentimental flute in literature; and not a man among us will go

to the head of the march to sound the heady drums.

An Inland Voyage.

AUGUST TWENTY-SEVENTH

A clean shrift makes simple living.

Will o' the Mill.

AUGUST TWENTY-EIGHTH

If we find but one to whom we can speak out of our heart freely, with whom we can walk in love and simplicity without dissimulation, we have no ground of quarrel with the world or God.

The Country of the Camisards.

AUGUST TWENTY-NINTH

Our judgments are based upon two things: first, upon the original preferences of our soul; but second, upon the mass of testimony to the nature of God, man, and the universe which reaches us, in divers manners, from without. For the most part these divers manners are reducible to one, all that we learn of past times and much that we learn of our own reaching us through the medium of books or papers, and even he who cannot read learning from the same source at second-hand and by the report of him who can.

Profession of Letters.

AUGUST THIRTIETH

Satire, the angry picture of human faults, is not great art; we can all be angry with our neighbour; what we want is to be shown, not his defects, of which we are too conscious, but his merits, to which we are too blind.

Books which have Influenced me.

AUGUST THIRTY-FIRST

A great part of this life consists in contemplating what we cannot cure.

The Master of Ballantrae.



SEPTEMBER

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SEPTEMBER FIRST

FORTUNE turns the wheel. They say she is blind, but we will hope she only sees a little farther on.

Prince Errant.

SEPTEMBER SECOND

It is only with a few rare natures that friendship is added to friendship, love to love, and the man keeps growing richer in affection — richer, I mean, as a bank may be said to grow richer, both giving and receiving more — after his head is white and his back weary, and he prepares to go down into the dust of death.

Familiar Studies — John Knox.

SEPTEMBER THIRD

I cannot forgive God for the sufferings of others; when I look abroad upon his world and behold its cruel destinies, I turn from him with disaffection; nor do I conceive that he will blame me for the impulse. But when I consider my own fates, I grow conscious of his

gentle dealing: I see him chastise with helpful blows, I feel his stripes to be caresses; and this knowledge is my comfort that reconciles me to the world.

Reflections and Remarks.

SEPTEMBER FOURTH

Hurry is the resource of the faithless. Where a man can trust his own heart, and those of his friends, to-morrow is as good as to-day.

Down the Oise.

SEPTEMBER FIFTH

Perhaps there is no subject on which a man should speak so gravely as that industry, whatever it may be, which is the occupation or delight of his life; which is his tool to earn or serve with; and which, if it be unworthy, stamps himself as a mere incubus of dumb and greedy bowels on the shoulders of labouring humanity.

Profession of Letters.

SEPTEMBER SIXTH

Hope, they say, deserts us at no period of our existence. From first to last, and in the face of smarting disillusion, we continue to expect good fortune, better health, and better conduct; and that so confidently that we judge it needless to deserve them.

Virginibus Puerisque.

SEPTEMBER SEVENTH

To hold the same views at forty as we held at twenty is to have been stupefied for a score of years, and take rank, not as a prophet, but as an unteachable brat, well birched and none the wiser. It is as if a ship captain should sail to India from the Port of London; and having brought a chart of the Thames on deck at his first setting out, should obstinately use no other for the whole voyage.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

SEPTEMBER EIGHTH

Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business, is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many things. And it is not by any means certain that a man's business is the most important thing he has to do.

An Apology for Idlers.

SEPTEMBER NINTH

In this world, in spite of its many agreeable features, even the most sensitive must undergo some drudgery to live. It is not possible to devote your time to study and meditation without what are quaintly but happily denominated private means; these absent, a man must contrive to earn his bread by some service to the public such as the public cares to pay him for.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

SEPTEMBER TENTH

We are in such haste to be doing, to be writing, to be gathering gear, to make our voice audible a moment in the derisive silence of eternity, that we forget that one thing, of which these are but the parts — namely, to live. We fall in love, we drink hard, we run to and fro upon the earth like frightened sheep. And now you are to ask yourself if, when all is done, you would not have been better to sit by the fire at home, and be happy thinking.

Walking Tours.

SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH

The essence of love is kindness.

Virginibus Puerisque.

SEPTEMBER TWELFTH

The course of our education is answered best by those poems and romances where we breathe a magnanimous atmosphere of thought and meet generous and pious characters.

Books which have Influenced me.

SEPTEMBER THIRTEENTH

A good son, who can fulfil what is expected of him, has done his work in life. He has to redeem the sins of many, and restore the world's confidence in children.

Reflections and Remarks.

SEPTEMBER FOURTEENTH

I meant when I was a young man to write a great poem; and now I am cobbling little prose articles and in excellent good spirits, I thank you. So, too, I meant to lead a life that should keep mounting from the first; and though I have been repeatedly down again below sea-level, and am scarce higher than when I started, I am as keen as ever for that enterprise. Our business in this world is not to succeed, but to continue to fail, in good spirits.

Discipline of Conscience.

SEPTEMBER FIFTEENTH

It were to be desired that all literary work, and chiefly works of art, issued from sound, human, healthy, and potent impulses, whether grave or laughing, humorous, romantic, or religious. Yet it cannot be denied that some valuable books are partially insane; some mostly religious, partially inhuman; and very many tainted with morbidity and impotence.

Profession of Letters.

SEPTEMBER SIXTEENTH

He who indulges habitually in the intoxicating pleasures of imagination, for the very reason that he reaps a greater pleasure than others, must resign himself to a keener pain, a more intolerable and utter prostration.

A Retrospect.

SEPTEMBER SEVENTEENTH

When we are put down in some unsightly neighbourhood, and especially if we have come to be more or less dependent on what we see, we must set ourselves to hunt out beautiful things with all the ardour and patience of a botanist after a rare plant.

Unpleasant Places.

SEPTEMBER EIGHTEENTH

All the world may be an aristocrat, and play the duke among marquises, and the reigning monarch among dukes, if he will only outvie them in tranquillity. An imperturbable demeanour comes from perfect patience. Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private place, like a clock during a thunder-storm.

An Inland Voyage.

SEPTEMBER NINETEENTH

It is very nice to think
The world is full of meat and drink,
With little children saying grace
In every Christian kind of place.

A Thought.

SEPTEMBER TWENTIETH

All we men and women have our sins ; and they are a pain to those that love us, and the deeper the love, the crueller the pain.

Admiral Guinea.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

For my part, I should try to secure some part of every day for meditation, above all in the early morning and the open air ; but how that time was to be improved I should leave to circumstance and the inspiration of the hour. Nor if I spent it in whistling or numbering my footsteps, should I consider it misspent for that. I should have given my conscience a fair field ; when it has anything to say, I know too well it can speak daggers ; therefore, for this time, my hard taskmaster has given me a holy-day, and I may go in again rejoicing to my breakfast and the human business of the day.

Discipline of Conscience.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

There is something stupefying in the recurrence of unimportant things. And it is only on rare provocations that we can rise to take an outlook beyond daily concerns, and comprehend the narrow limits and great possibilities of our existence.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

No class of man is altogether bad ; but each has its own faults and virtues.

Kidnapped.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

It is one of the worst things of sentiment that the voice grows to be more important than the words, and the speaker than that which is spoken.

The Master of Ballantrae.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

We should hesitate to assume command of an army or a trading-smack ; shall we not hesitate to become surety for the life and happiness, now and henceforward, of our dearest friend ? To be nobody's enemy but one's own, although it is never possible to any, can least of all be possible to one who is married.

Reflections and Remarks

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

Even in love there are unlovely humours ; ambiguous acts, unpardonable words, may yet have sprung from a kind sentiment. If the injured one could read your heart, you may be sure that he would understand and pardon ; but, alas ! the heart cannot be shown — it has to be demonstrated in words.

Virginibus Puerisque.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

That for which man lives is not the same thing for all individuals nor in all ages ; yet it has a common base ; what he seeks and what he must have is that which will seize and hold his attention.

The Day after To-morrow.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

The correction of silence is what kills ; when you know you have transgressed, and your friend says nothing and avoids your eye.

Talk and Talkers.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

As we go catching and catching at this or that corner of knowledge, now getting a foresight of generous possibilities, now chilled with a glimpse of prudence, we may compare the headlong course of our years to a swift torrent in which a man is carried away ; now he is dashed against a boulder, now he grapples for a moment to a trailing spray ; at the end, he is hurled out and overwhelmed in a dark and bottomless ocean. We have no more than glimpses and touches ; we are torn away from our theories ; we are spun round and round and shown this or the other view of life, until only fools or knaves can hold to their opinions.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

SEPTEMBER THIRTIETH

Nothing grave has yet befallen me but I have been able to reconcile my mind to its occurrence, and see in it, from my own little and partial point of view, an evidence of a tender and protecting God. Even the misconduct into which I have been led has been blessed to my improvement. If I did not sin, and that so glaringly that my conscience is convicted on the spot, I do not know what I should become, but I feel sure I should grow worse.

Gratitude to God.



OCTOBER

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OCTOBER FIRST

SING a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!

Autumn Fires.

OCTOBER SECOND

It is the mark of a good action that it appears inevitable in the retrospect. We should have been cut-throats to do otherwise. And there's an end. We ought to know distinctly that we are damned for what we do wrong; but when we have done right, we have only been gentlemen, after all. There is nothing to make a work about.

Reflections and Remarks.

OCTOBER THIRD

New truth is only useful to supplement the old; rough truth is only wanted to expand, not to destroy, our civil and often elegant conventions. He who cannot judge had better stick to fiction

and the daily papers. There he will get little harm, and, in the first at least, some good.

Books which have Influenced me.

OCTOBER FOURTH

Surely, at this time of day in the nineteenth century, there is nothing that an honest man should fear more timorously than getting and spending more than he deserves.

Profession of Letters.

OCTOBER FIFTH

People are all glad to shut their eyes; and it gives them a very simple pleasure when they can forget that our laws commit a million individual injustices, to be once roughly just in the general; that the bread that we eat, and the quiet of the family, and all that embellishes life and makes it worth having, have to be purchased by death — by the deaths of animals, and the deaths of men wearied out with labor, and the deaths of those criminals called tyrants and revolutionaries, and the deaths of those revolutionaries called criminals.

Familiar Studies — Victor Hugo.

OCTOBER SIXTH

It is a question hard to be resolved, whether you should at any time criminate another to defend yourself. I have done it many times, and always had a troubled conscience for my pains.

Justice and Justification.

OCTOBER SEVENTH

There is always something painful in sudden contact with the good qualities that we do not possess.

A Retrospect.

OCTOBER EIGHTH

Falling in love and winning love are often difficult tasks to overbearing and rebellious spirits; but to keep in love is also a business of some importance, to which both man and wife must bring kindness and goodwill.

El Dorado.

OCTOBER NINTH

As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognise our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact.

Aes Triplex.

OCTOBER TENTH

Trees are the most civil society. An old oak that has been growing where he stands since before the Reformation, taller than many spires, more stately than the greater part of mountains, and yet a living thing, liable to sicknesses and death, like you and me: is not that in itself a speaking lesson in history?

On the Sambre Canalized.

OCTOBER ELEVENTH

The more you look into it the more infinite are the class distinctions among men; and possibly, by a happy dispensation, there is no one at all at the bottom of the scale; no one but can find some superiority over somebody else, to keep up his pride withal.

An Inland Voyage.

OCTOBER TWELFTH

God made you, but you marry yourself; and for all that your wife suffers, no one is responsible but you.

Virginibus Puerisque.

OCTOBER THIRTEENTH

Let us, by all means, fight against that hide-bound stolidity of sensation and sluggishness of mind which blurs and decolorises for poor natures the wonderful pageant of consciousness; let us teach people, as much as we can, to

enjoy, and they will learn for themselves to sympathise; but let us see to it, above all, that we give these lessons in a brave, vivacious note, and build the man up in courage while we demolish its substitute, indifference.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

OCTOBER FOURTEENTH

By managing its own work and following its own happy inspiration, youth is doing the best it can to endow the leisure of age. A full, busy youth is your only prelude to a self-contained and independent age.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

OCTOBER FIFTEENTH

Talk is indeed, both the scene and instrument of friendship. It is in talk alone that the friends can measure strength, and enjoy that amicable counter-assertion of personality which is the gauge of relations and the sport of life.

Talk and Talkers.

OCTOBER SIXTEENTH

We must all set our pocket watches by the clock of fate. There is a headlong, forthright tide, that bears away man with his fancies like straw, and runs fast in time and space.

Down the Oise.

OCTOBER SEVENTEENTH

You would think, when the child was born, there would be an end to trouble ; and yet it is only the beginning of fresh anxieties ; and when you have seen it through its teething and its education, and at last its marriage, alas ! it is only to have new fears, new quivering sensibilities, with every day ; and the health of your children's children grows as touching a concern as that of your own.

El Dorado.

OCTOBER EIGHTEENTH

It is our business here to speak, for it is by the tongue that we multiply ourselves most influentially. To speak kindly, wisely, and pleasantly is the first of duties, the easiest of duties, and the duty that is most blessed in its performance. For it is natural, it whiles away life, it spreads intelligence ; and it increases the acquaintance of man with man.

Reflections and Remarks.

OCTOBER NINETEENTH

A good man or woman may keep a youth some little while in clearer air ; but the contemporary atmosphere is all powerful in the end on the average of mediocre characters.

Profession of Letters.

OCTOBER TWENTIETH

The true ignorance is when a man does not know that he has received a good gift, or begins to imagine that he has got it for himself.

An Inland Voyage.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIRST

It is the particular cross of parents that when the child grows up and becomes himself instead of that pale ideal they had preconceived, they must accuse their own harshness or indulgence for this natural result. They have all been like the duck and hatched swan's eggs, or the other way about; yet they tell themselves with miserable penitence that the blame lies with them; and had they sat more closely, the swan would have been a duck, and home-keeping in spite of all.

Parent and Child.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SECOND

Not all men can read all books; it is only in a chosen few that any man will find his appointed food; and the fittest lessons are the most palatable, and make themselves welcome to the mind.

Books which have Influenced me.

OCTOBER TWENTY-THIRD

The existence of a man is so small a thing to take, so mighty a thing to employ !

The Suicide Club.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FOURTH

To love playthings well as a child, to lead an adventurous and honourable youth, and to settle when the time arrives, into a green and smiling age, is to be a good artist in life and deserve well of yourself and your neighbour.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIFTH

Times are changed with him who marries ; there are no more by-path meadows, where you may innocently linger, but the road lies long and straight and dusty to the grave. Idleness which is often becoming and even wise in the bachelor, begins to wear a different aspect when you have a wife to support.

Virginibus Puerisque.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SIXTH

Samuel Johnson, although he was very sorry to be poor, " was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty " in his ill days. Thus it is that brave men carry their crosses, and smile with the fox burrowing in their vitals.

Familiar Studies — François Villon.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

To be truly happy is a question of how we begin and not of how we end, of what we want and not of what we have.

El Dorado.

OCTOBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

When people take the trouble to do dignified acts, it is worth while to take a little more, and allow the dignity to be common to all concerned.

On the Sambre Canalized.

OCTOBER TWENTY-NINTH

Good talk is dramatic ; it is like an impromptu piece of acting where each should represent himself to the greatest advantage ; and that is the best kind of talk where each speaker is most fully and candidly himself, and where, if you were to shift the speeches round from one to another, there would be the greatest loss in significance and perspicuity.

Talk and Talkers.

OCTOBER THIRTIETH

There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor.

An Apology for Idlers.

OCTOBER THIRTY-FIRST

To live is sometimes very difficult, but it is never meritorious in itself; and we must have a reason to allege to our own conscience why we should continue to exist upon this crowded earth.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.



NOVEMBER

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NOVEMBER FIRST

HOPE lives on ignorance; open-eyed Faith is built upon a knowledge of our life, of the tyranny of circumstance and the frailty of human resolution. Hope looks for unqualified success; but Faith counts certainly on failure, and takes honourable defeat to be a form of victory.

Virginibus Puerisque.

NOVEMBER SECOND

Men who are in any way typical of a stage of progress may be compared more justly to the hand upon the dial of the clock, which continues to advance as it indicates, than to the stationary milestone, which is only the measure of what is past.

Victor Hugo's Romances.

NOVEMBER THIRD

Over the far larger proportion of the field of literature, the health or disease of the writer's mind or momentary humour forms not only the leading feature of his work, but is, at bottom,

the only thing he can communicate to others. In all works of art, widely speaking, it is first of all the author's attitude that is narrated, though in the attitude there be implied a whole experience and a theory of life.

Profession of Letters.

NOVEMBER FOURTH

Passion, wisdom, creative force, the power of mystery or colour, are allotted in the hour of birth, and can be neither learnt nor simulated.

A Note on Realism.

NOVEMBER FIFTH

Surely, of all smells in the world the smell of many trees is the sweetest and most fortifying. The sea has a rude pistolling sort of odour, that takes you in the nostrils like snuff, and carries with it a fine sentiment of open water and tall ships; but the smell of a forest, which comes nearest to this in tonic quality, surpasses it by many degrees in the quality of softness. Again, the smell of the sea has little variety, but the smell of a forest is infinitely changeful; it varies with the hour of the day, not in strength merely, but in character; and the different sorts of trees, as you go from one zone of the wood to another, seem to live among different kinds of atmosphere.

An Inland Voyage.

NOVEMBER SIXTH

If a man works hearty in the order of nature, he gets bread and he receives comfort, and whatever he touches breeds.

Prince Errant.

NOVEMBER SEVENTH

No fate is altogether easy; but trials are our touchstone, trials overcome our reward.

Memoir of Fleming Jenkin.

NOVEMBER EIGHTH

We are not all patient Grizzels, by good fortune, but the most of us human beings with feelings and tempers of our own.

Nurses.

NOVEMBER NINTH

Happiness, at least, is not solitary; it joys to communicate; it loves others, for it depends on them for its existence; it sanctions and encourages to all delights that are not unkind in themselves; if it lived to a thousand, it would not make excision of a single humorous passage; and while the self-improver dwindles toward the prig, and, if he be not of an excellent constitution, may even grow deformed into an Obermann, the very name and appearance of a happy man breathe of good nature, and help the rest of us to live.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

NOVEMBER TENTH

It must always be foul to tell what is false; and it can never be safe to suppress what is true. The very fact that you omit may be what somebody was wanting, for one man's meat is another man's poison.

Profession of Letters.

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH

There is only one way to be honest, and the name of that is thrift.

Admiral Guinea.

NOVEMBER TWELFTH

Marriage is like life in this — that it is a field of battle, and not a bed of roses.

Virginibus Puerisque.

NOVEMBER THIRTEENTH

Pleasures are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and they are twice blest. There must always be two to a kiss, and there may be a score in a jest; but wherever there is an element of sacrifice, the favour is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion.

An Apology for Idlers.

NOVEMBER FOURTEENTH

Literature, like any other art, is singularly interesting to the artist; and in a degree peculiar to itself among the arts, it is useful to mankind. These are the sufficient justifications for any young man or woman who adopts it as the business of his life.

Profession of Letters.

NOVEMBER FIFTEENTH

The result is the reward of actions, not the test. The result is a child born; if it be beautiful and healthy, well; if club-footed or crook-back, perhaps well also. We cannot direct.

Reflections and Remarks.

NOVEMBER SIXTEENTH

Humble or even truckling virtue may walk unspotted in this life. But only those who despise the pleasures can afford to despise the opinion of the world.

Familiar Studies—François Villon.

NOVEMBER SEVENTEENTH

Our life about us lies
O'erscrawled with crooked writ; we toil in vain
To hear the hymn of ancient harmonies
That quire upon the mountain or the plain;
And from the august silence of the skies
Babble of speech returns to us again.

The Arabesque.

NOVEMBER EIGHTEENTH

To wash in one of God's rivers in the open air seems to me a sort of cheerful solemnity or semi-pagan act of worship. To dabble among dishes in a bedroom may perhaps make clean the body ; but the imagination takes no share in such cleansing.

Travels with a Donkey.

NOVEMBER NINETEENTH

The more he is alone with nature, the greater man and his doings bulk in the consideration of his fellow-men.

Toils and Pleasures.

NOVEMBER TWENTIETH

The nearer you come to it, you see that death is a dark and dusty corner, where a man gets into his tomb and has the door shut after him till the judgment day.

The Sire de Malétroit's Door.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

There are two duties incumbent upon any man who enters on the business of writing : truth to the fact and a good spirit in the treatment. In every department of literature, though so low as hardly to deserve the name, truth to the fact is of importance to the education and comfort of

mankind, and so hard to preserve, that the faithful trying to do so will lend some dignity to the man who tries it.

Profession of Letters.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

Where youth agrees with age, not where they differ, wisdom lies; and it is when the young disciple finds his heart to beat in tune with his gray-bearded teacher's that a lesson may be learned.

Talk and Talkers.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

The body is a house of many windows: there we all sit, showing ourselves and crying on the passers-by to come and love us.

Virginibus Puerisque.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

There are not three ways of getting money: there are but two: to earn and steal.

Of Love and Politics.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

We are different with different friends; yet if we look closely we shall find that every such relation reposes on some particular apotheosis of oneself; with each friend, although we could not distinguish it in words from any other, we have at least one

special reputation to preserve: and it is thus that we run, when mortified, to our friend or the woman that we love, not to hear ourselves called better, but to be better men in point of fact.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

We live the time that a match flickers; we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not, in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger-beer, and regard so little the devouring earthquake?

Aes Triplex.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

When you have married your wife, you would think you were got upon a hilltop, and might begin to go downward by an easy slope. But you have only ended courting to begin marriage.

El Dorado.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

A man may practise resignation all his days, as he takes physic, and not come to like it in the end.

Prince Errant.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

To take home to your hearth that living witness whose blame will most affect you, to eat, to sleep, to live with your most admiring and thence most exacting judge, is not this to domesticate the living God? Each becomes a conscience to the other, legible like a clock up on the chimney-piece. Each offers to his mate a figure of the consequence of human acts. And while I may still continue by my inconsiderate or violent life to spread far-reaching havoc throughout man's confederacy, I can do so no more, at least, in ignorance and levity; one face shall wince before me in the flesh; I have taken home the sorrows I create to my own hearth and bed; and though I continue to sin, it must be now with open eyes.

Reflections and Remarks.

NOVEMBER THIRTIETH

What is care? impiety. Joy? the whole duty of man.

Macaire.



DECEMBER

. . .

DECEMBER FIRST

IT is a poor heart, and a poorer age, that cannot accept the conditions of life with some heroic readiness.

Familiar Studies — François Villon.

DECEMBER SECOND

Never allow your mind to dwell on your own misconduct: that is ruin. The conscience has morbid sensibilities; it must be employed but not indulged, like the imagination or the stomach. Let each stab suffice for the occasion; to play with this spiritual pain turns to penance; and a person easily learns to feel good by dallying with the consciousness of having done wrong.

Reflections and Remarks.

DECEMBER THIRD

The cruellest lies are often told in silence. A man may have sat in a room for hours and not opened his teeth, and yet come out of that room a disloyal friend or a vile calumniator. . . . And again, a lie may be told by a truth, or a truth

conveyed through a lie. Truth to facts is not always truth to sentiment ; and part of the truth, as often happens in answer to a question, may be the foulest calumny.

Virginibus Puerisque.

DECEMBER FOURTH

The desire to please, to shine with a certain softness of lustre and to draw a fascinating picture of oneself, banishes from conversation all that is sterling and most of what is humorous.

Talk and Talkers.

DECEMBER FIFTH

It is in virtue of his own desires and curiosities that any man continues to exist with even patience, that he is charmed by the look of things and people, and that he wakens every morning with a renewed appetite for work and pleasure. Desire and curiosity are the two eyes through which he sees the world in the most enchanted colours : it is they that make women beautiful or fossils interesting ; and the man may squander his estate and come to beggary, but if he keeps these two amulets he is still rich in the possibilities of pleasure.

El Dorado.

DECEMBER SIXTH

You may have a head knowledge that other people live more poorly than yourself, but it is not agreeable — I was going to say, it is against the etiquette of the universe — to sit at the same table and pick your own superior diet from among their crusts.

An Inland Voyage.

DECEMBER SEVENTH

Courage is the principal virtue, for all the others presuppose it. If you are afraid, you may do anything. Courage is to be cultivated, and some of the negative virtues may be sacrificed in the cultivation.

Reflections and Remarks.

DECEMBER EIGHTH

After a good woman, and a good book, and tobacco, there is nothing so agreeable on earth as a river.

Down the Oise.

DECEMBER NINTH

A man does not only reflect upon what he might have done in a future that is never to be his; but beholding himself so early a deserter from the fight, he eats his heart for the good he might have done already. To have been so useless and now to lose all hope of being useful any more — there it is that death and memory

assail him. And even if mankind shall go on, founding heroic cities, practising heroic virtues, rising steadily from strength to strength; even if his work shall be fulfilled, his friends consoled, his wife remarried by a better than he; how shall this alter, in one jot, his estimation of a career which was his only business in this world, which was so fitfully pursued, and which is now so ineffectively to end?

Ordered South.

DECEMBER TENTH

That many of us lead such lives as they would heartily disown after two hours serious reflection on the subject is, I am afraid, a true, and, I am sure, a very galling thought.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

DECEMBER ELEVENTH

There is not a life in all the records of the past but, properly studied, might lend a hint and a help to some contemporary.

Profession of Letters.

DECEMBER TWELFTH

It is better to lose health like a spendthrift than to waste it like a miser. It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sickroom.

Aes Triplex.

DECEMBER THIRTEENTH

Because I have reached Paris, I am not ashamed of having passed through Newhaven and Dieppe. They were very good places to pass through, and I am none the less at my destination. All my old opinions were only stages on the way to the one I now hold, as itself is only a stage on the way to something else.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

DECEMBER FOURTEENTH

A common sentiment is one of those great goods that make life palatable and ever new. The knowledge that another has felt as we have felt, and seen things, even if they are little things, not much otherwise than we have seen them, will continue to the end to be one of life's choicest pleasures.

Roads.

DECEMBER FIFTEENTH

Every one who has been upon a walking or a boating tour, living in the open air, with the body in constant exercise and the mind in fallow, knows true ease and quiet. The irritating action of the brain is set at rest; we think in a plain, unfeverish temper; little things seem big enough, and great things no longer portentous; and the world is smilingly accepted as it is.

Familiar Studies — Walt Whitman.

DECEMBER SIXTEENTH

Honour can survive a wound ; it can live and thrive without a member.

Memories and Portraits.

DECEMBER SEVENTEENTH

There are many matters in which you may way-lay Destiny, and bid him stand and deliver. Hard work, high thinking, adventurous excitement, and a great deal more that forms a part of this or the other person's spiritual bill of fare, are within the reach of almost any one who can dare a little and be patient.

Virginibus Puerisque.

DECEMBER EIGHTEENTH

The solitary recoils from the practice of life, shocked by its unsightliness. But if I could only retain that superfine and guiding delicacy of the sense that grows in solitude, and still combine with it that courage of performance which is never abashed by any failure, but steadily pursues its right and human design in a scene of imperfection, I might hope to strike in the long-run a conduct more tender to others and less humiliating to myself.

Reflections and Remarks.

DECEMBER NINETEENTH

Marriage is one long conversation, chequered by disputes. The disputes are valueless; they but ingrain the difference; the heroic heart of woman prompting her at once to nail her colours to the mast.

Talk and Talkers.

DECEMBER TWENTIETH

How little we pay our way in life! Although we have our purses continually in our hand, the better part of service goes still unrewarded.

An Inland Voyage.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

If I from my spy-hole, looking with purblind eyes upon the least part of a fraction of the universe, yet perceive in my own destiny some broken evidence of a plan and some signals of an overruling goodness; shall I then be so mad as to complain that all cannot be deciphered? Shall I not rather wonder, with infinite and grateful surprise, that in so vast a scheme I seem to have been able to read, however little, and that that little was encouraging to faith?

Gratitude to God.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

You may safely go to school with hope ; but ere you marry, should have learned the mingled lesson of the world : that dolls are stuffed with sawdust, and yet are excellent playthings ; that hope and love address themselves to a perfection never realised, and yet, firmly held, become the salt and staff of life.

Virginibus Puerisque.

DECEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

Truth in a relation, truth to your own heart and your friends, never to feign or falsify emotion — that is the truth which makes love possible and mankind happy.

Virginibus Puerisque.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

A child should always say what 's true
And speak when he is spoken to,
And behave mannerly at table :
At least as far as he is able.

Whole Duty of Children.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

The nearer the intimacy, the more cuttingly do we feel the unworthiness of those we love ; and because you love one, and would die for that love to-morrow, you have not forgiven, and you never will forgive, that friend's misconduct. If

you want a person's faults, go to those who love him. They will not tell you, but they know. And herein lies the magnanimous courage of love, that it endures this knowledge without change.

Familiar Studies — Thoreau.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

Doubtless the world is quite right in a million ways ; but you have to be kicked about a little to convince you of the fact. And in the meanwhile you must do something, be something, believe something.

Crabbed Age and Youth.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

I would not so much fear to give hostages to fortune, if fortune ruled only in material things ; but fortune, as we call those minor and more inscrutable workings of providence, rules also in the sphere of conduct.

Reflections and Remarks.

DECEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

While we may none of us, perhaps, be very vigorous, very original, or very wise, I still contend that, in the humblest sort of literary work, we have it in our power either to do great harm or great good.

Profession of Letters.

DECEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

To husband a favourite claret until the batch turns sour, is not at all an artful stroke of policy ; and how much more with a whole cellar — a whole bodily existence ! People may lay down their lives with cheerfulness in the sure expectation of a blessed immortality ; but that is a different affair from giving up youth with all its admirable pleasures, in the hope of a better quality of gruel in a more than problematical, nay, more than improbable, old age.

Grabbed Age and Youth.

DECEMBER THIRTIETH

I feel never quite sure of your urbane and smiling coteries ; I fear they indulge a man's vanities in silence, suffer him to encroach, encourage him on to be an ass, and send him forth again, not merely condemned for the moment, but radically more contemptible than when he entered.

Memories and Portraits.

DECEMBER THIRTY-FIRST

O, hope, you 're a good word !

Admiral Guinea.

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